

Interservice Technical Training

Avoiding the proficiency credit pitfall

by TSgt James Dinsmoore

Community College of the Air Force

More than 2,000 Air Force enlisted personnel attend initial skills (three-level) training each year at Army, Navy, or Department of Defense schools not affiliated with the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF). While there are certainly advantages to attending interservice schools, this scenario has created some confusion and misinterpretation regarding the type of college credit students will receive.

There are several issues involved in receiving CCAF credit for attending non-Air Force technical schools, including whether the school is affiliated with CCAF and whether the individual has completed residency requirements and five-level training.

Why Interservice Training?

When DoD determined that consolidating two or more sister service schools into one could save vast amounts of money, a shuffling of schools took place that ultimately resulted in some Air Force schools falling under the umbrella of other services. For example, the Structural Apprentice course moved from Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas, to Gulfport, Miss. This presented a dilemma in that many students were not receiving credit for completed coursework because the course changed hands from the Air Force to the Navy. This realignment changed the way CCAF could award credit to Air Force students because the school was no longer owned by the Air Force.

Affiliated vs. Non-Affiliated Schools

The Air Force is the only service granted authority by public law to establish a community college. All schools “affiliated” with CCAF must be *owned* by the Air Force. Courses delivered by the Air Force have an Air Force course number. Most students attending technical school at Air Education and Training Command bases such as Sheppard or Keesler will attend an “ABR” course. ABR is an abbreviation for “Airman Basic Resident.”

Courses with an ABA or ABN prefix are not owned by the Air Force. These are abbreviations for Airman Basic Army and Airman Basic Navy, respectively. Air Force students attending these courses at “non-affiliated” schools are issued Air Force certificates of training, but both public law and accreditation rules prevent CCAF from recognizing them as resident courses.

Meeting Residency Requirements

CCAF is accredited through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). This accreditation dictates several internal college policies. In order to maintain accreditation through SACS, all degree programs must meet minimum acceptable standards. One standard established by SACS is that of *residency*.

Residency, in regards to a degree program, is the amount of credit delivered by the degree awarding institution. Colleges and schools accredited by SACS must ensure that 25 percent of the credit is taken from and delivered by the degree granting institution.

Each CCAF degree program consists of 64 semester hours. This means that CCAF must deliver 16 semester hours of resident course-work. The fact that the initial skills-awarding courses do not meet the residency requirement doesn’t mean the student will never be able to complete a CCAF degree, it simply means it may take a little longer than it does some of their Air Force counterparts.

The residency requirement can be fulfilled through several different sources. In fact, every Airman earns four semester hours of residency credit in physical education with the completion of basic training and participation in

the Air Force physical fitness program. Airman Leadership School is currently worth an additional eight semester hours and five-level internship is currently valued at four semester hours. The cumulative total of these three items is 16 semester hours — the minimum residency requirement.

Applying the Proficiency Credit

When course ownership transferred from the Air Force to our sister services, CCAF obtained applicable course documents, evaluated, then assigned an appropriate semester hour value for initial skills courses. Whereas credit earned as a result of this process could not be considered CCAF degree applicable *resident* credit, CCAF determined the credit could be considered *proficiency* credit (P-credit).

P-credit is based on demonstrated knowledge and task competency that is validated by the award of the five-level skill level code. Once the five-level skill code is obtained, P-credit can then be applied toward completion of a CCAF degree.

Getting it on Record

Graduates of civil engineer interservice training courses are reported through the 366th Training Squadron at Sheppard AFB to the Air Force Training Management System and ultimately to CCAF. This credit is normally reflected on students' CCAF records and can be applied toward fulfillment of the related specialty degree program.

Some students may have to submit a copy of their training certificate through their base education office to have the credits loaded to their records. This is either because they completed the course before the school began automatic reporting of graduates, or because their records were incorrectly updated.

If you have questions regarding your education records, please contact your base education office or the author, TSgt James Dinsmoore, civil engineer degree programs manager, CCAF, at DSN 493-6449, or e-mail james.dinsmoore@maxwell.af.mil.

The CCAF Mission

CCAF degree programs are aimed at enhancing the occupational competency of career non-commissioned officers, as opposed to first-term airmen who are busy learning their Air Force jobs, preparing for their journeyman skill level, and becoming productive members of the Air Force team.

CCAF's charter is to offer job-related Associate of Applied Science degree programs that enhance mission readiness, contribute to recruiting, and assist in retention of Air Force enlisted personnel. The program is structured so that the degree is earned on the second or subsequent enlistment — which supports the retention and readiness part of the mission statement. Currently, the average CCAF graduate is a staff sergeant with 13 years of service.

Apprentice courses, training locations and their respective P-credit value: (Course credit varies depending on completion date.)

Pavement Maintenance/Construction Equipment Operator Apprentice

Ft. Leonard Wood, Mo.

24 semester hours

Engineer Apprentice

Ft. Leonard Wood, Mo.

26 semester hours

Structural Apprentice

Gulfport, Miss.

31 semester hours

Explosive Ordnance Disposal/Phase I & Phase II
Eglin AFB, Fla.
50 semester hours

PcreditAutoCad & PcreditAutoCad

Airmen, soldiers, sailors and Marines learn structural design in the Engineering Apprentice course at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., one of two interservice courses offered by Det. 7, 366 Training Squadron that provide proficiency credit. The other is Pavements & Equipment Apprentice. *(Photos courtesy Det 7, 366 TRS)*